

What are settlements and localities?

Settlements and localities represent the urban or built-up areas of Scotland.

Settlements are groups of adjacent, densely populated postcode areas that add up to 500 people or more. They are separated by low density postcodes.

Larger settlements are sometimes divided into localities. Localities correspond to the historical towns of Scotland.

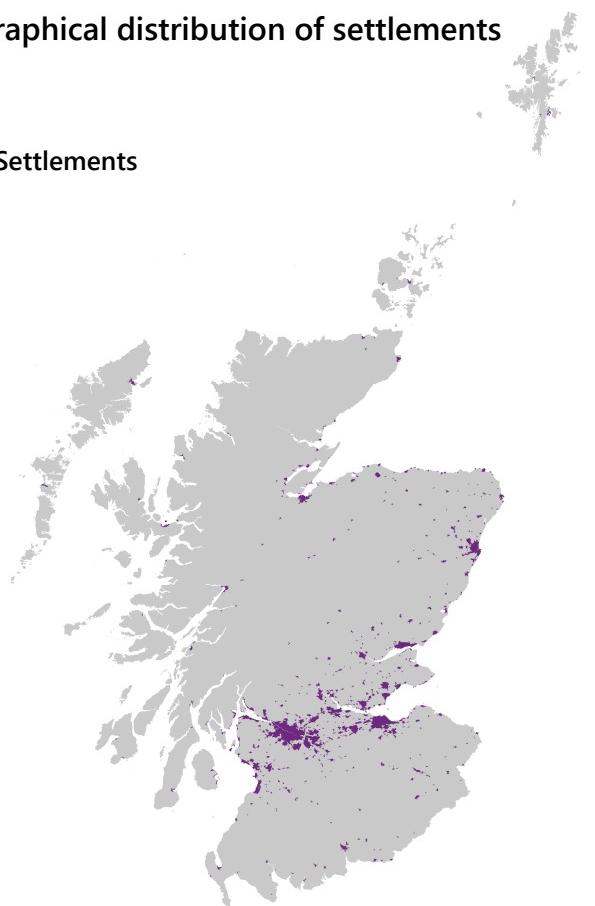
In mid-2020, 91% of Scotland's population lived in settlements and localities, which made up only 2.3% of Scotland's total land area.

There were 514 settlements in Scotland in mid-2020.

Geographical distribution of settlements



Settlements



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Population of settlements

The populations of Scotland's settlements ranged from 500 to 1,028,220.

The median population was 1,905, and the mean was 9,678. There are a few settlements with very large populations compared with most.

Detailed tables containing the latest population estimates by age and sex are available from the [NRS website](#).

Geographic shape files, which help to visualise settlement and locality boundaries using GIS software, are also available from the [NRS website](#).

Population distribution of settlements

